SRI S. K. SAMBANDHAN : Sir, I would like to know whether Mrs. Varghese is qualified to give it on behalf of the Government of Madras, and whether the Government have paid any travelling allowance for this purpose.

THE HON. SRI R. VENKATARAMAN : I think it is too small a matter to discuss in the House.

Bridge on the National Highways near Vidur Dam

*3 Q.—SRI S. K. SAMBANDHAN : Will the Hon. the Minister for Food be pleased to state— 3–10 p.m.

(a) whether the Government are aware that the bridge on the National Highways near Vidur Dam has collapsed in the floods some years before;

(b) if so, the year in which the bridge was collapsed;

(c) whether there is any proposal to construct a new bridge at that place; and

(d) if so, the stage at which the matter now stands?

THE HON. SRI V. RAMAIAH : (a) Yes.

(b) In the year 1960.

(c) & (d) There is a proposal to reconstruct the bridge and the approval of the Government of India to the estimate for the work is awaited.

SRI S. K. SAMBANDHAN : Will the Hon. Minister tell us why, even though three years elapsed, the estimate for the construction of that bridge has not been prepared?

THE HON. SRI V. RAMAIAH : The estimate has been prepared. It has been sent to the Government of India. They have asked for some clarification and that is being looked into.

SRI M. SUBBIAH CHETTIAR : It takes a long time to get the sanction of the Government of India. It is a National Highway, and there is a possibility of an accident. To my knowledge there is no road at all in that place. There is no road as per the specifications of the department.

THE HON. SRI V. RAMAIAH : There has been some delay due to some arguments whether this washing away was due to the construction of the tank. That doubt has been cleared. An estimate has been prepared and it has been sent to the Government of India and we expect them to approve it as soon as possible.

SRI S. K. SAMBANDHAN : It is not a small delay. Whatever of it is when the estimate was sent to the Government of India, when do the Government think of getting their approval ?

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THE HON. SRI V. RAMAIAH : This has been a continuous process of our aproach. In their last letter, dated the 11th June 1965 they asked for certain clarifications. A reply has been sent and we expect a reply from them soon.

SRI S. K. SAMBANDHAN : This is an important road—a national highway—from Madras to Dindigul. Will the Government take steps to expedite it?

THE HON. SRI V. RAMAIAH : It will be taken up as soon as possible.

SRI K. ANBAZHAGAN : A technical opinion has been given by the Madras State in which there are so many expert engineers. Will it be approved by the Central Government or is it doubted?

THE HON SRI V. RAMAIAH : It is not doubted. There are certain difficulties and doubts and they have to be cleared.

Over bridges at pedestrian crossings

* 4 *Q.*—SRI S. K. SAMBANDHAN : Will the Hon. the Minister for Food be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether there is any proposal to construct overbridges at pedestrian crossings in Mount Road and Poonamallee High Road, Madras; and

(*b*) if so, the stage at which the matter now stands?

THE HON. SRI V. RAMAIAH : (*a*) & (*b*) At present there is no proposal to construct overbridges at pedestrian crossings in Mount Road and Poonamalle High Road.

SRI S. K. SAMBANDHAN : Are the Government aware of the difficulties of both the pedestrians and the motorists at important places like the Central station and many places in Mount Road? Will the Government consider the question of constructing overbridge at some of the important places immediately?

THE HON. SRI V. RAMAIAH : This is being constantly looked intc. The question is whether an overbridge is required or whether a subway is required. All that is being looked into. Hon. Members know that we have already started work on the subway at Round Tana and another subway is under construction at the Central station.

SRI S. K. SAMBANDHAN : The construction of a subway is more complicated and costlier also than that of an overbridge. Iron overbridges will be much cheaper and can be constructed at lesser time. They can be removed at any time, if the Government think of contructing other complicated subways. So, will the Government consider the question of constructing the overbridges at the Central station and in one or two places in the Poonamalee High Road?